

Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee
Arizona Department of Transportation
206 S. 17th Avenue, Rm 145-147
Phoenix, AZ 85017

Minutes
September 16, 2003

A Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC) meeting was held at the Arizona Department of Transportation, Board Room 145-147, Phoenix, Arizona on September 16, 2003 with Chairperson Roc Arnett presiding.

Members Present:

Roc Arnett, Chairperson
Dwight Amery, Member-at-Large
Ron Gawlitta, Maricopa County District 3
Jim Lykins, Maricopa County District 2

Members Absent:

Tom Liddy, Maricopa County District 1
Paul Schwartz, Maricopa County District 4

Others Present:

Debra Brisk, ADOT Deputy Director	Doug Nintzel, ADOT
Michael Chase, Stanley Consultants	Dianne Barker, Citizen
Steve Jimenez, ADOT	Bill Hayden, ADOT
Kwi-Sung Kang, ADOT	Andy Smith, ADOT
Arif Kazmi, ADOT	Vince Li, ADOT
Jackie Noblitt, Kimley-Horn & Assoc.	Paul Waung, DMJM-Harris, Inc.
Elizabeth Neville, ADOT	Dan Lance, ADOT
Ed Johnson, Citizen	William "Blue" Crowley, Citizen

1. Call To Order:

Chairperson Arnett called the Citizen's Transportation Oversight Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes for July 24, 2003:

Chairperson Arnett called for a motion. Ron Gawlitta moved to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2003 meeting and Jim Lykins seconded the motion.

3. Staff Report:

Bill Hayden, ADOT, reported the following information:

- Copies of an update on the Regional Freeway System projects were provided to the Committee. Significant progress is being made on several projects, particularly with regard to the Higley to Power section of the Red Mountain Freeway.
- The Transportation Policy Committee meets tomorrow to vote on the draft half-cent sales tax extension plan, which will then, hopefully be approved the following week by MAG Regional Council.
- With regard to allegations of a conflict of interest concerning the Chairman's participation in MAG Regional Council meetings, specifically, the evening meal that follows the MAG Regional Council meetings, exhaustive research has been done on the issue and information has been presented to the Transportation Legal Division. The following excerpt from an opinion given by James Redpath, one of the Department's attorneys, was read into the record: "I have looked at the circumstances of Mr. Arnett as you have outlined them and, under those circumstances, see no conflict of interest or misuse of public funds."
- We have presented the Department's plans to utilize rubberized asphalt as a noise mitigation measure and advised the Committee of ADOT's partnership with FHWA to implement a pilot noise study in Arizona. Two issues have come up over the past two months:
 - Numerous informational public meetings were held with neighborhoods in the area of the Santan Freeway between Dobson and Alma School Roads. The Department had initially indicated that the noise wall height could be between 18 and 20 feet, however, some adjacent residents stated they would prefer a shorter wall. After modeling rubberized asphalt on that section of the Santan, it was determined that a 14 foot high wall would be sufficient to meet a maximum noise level of 64 decibels. Other residents, however, felt the Department made a commitment to construct the 18 to 20 foot high walls and provide rubberized asphalt. A series of contentious meetings and considerable media coverage of the issue ensued. After review, the Department ultimately agreed to honor its real or perceived prior commitment to construct the 18 to 20 foot high wall and provide rubberized asphalt. In the future, there will be considerable discussions concerning wall heights as ADOT meets with Mayors and staff of other east valley cities.
 - Noise studies conducted along the Red Mountain Freeway from Gilbert to Val Vista found that ambient noise levels prior to construction were quite low, however, as a result of highway construction and an experimental concrete section, noise levels increased significantly. As a result, they met with the neighborhoods, the Mayor and the Council representatives and Legislators for the area and agreed to have the consultant conduct a new noise analysis, revisit all documentation and return with a recommendation in one month. The consultant recommended a 14 to 16 foot wall be constructed along the north side of the freeway from just west of Gilbert to the Val Vista interchange.

The rubberized asphalt overlay, originally scheduled for next spring, has also been advanced to next month. We will retest the noise levels once the rubberized asphalt overlay is in place.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Mr. Hayden confirmed for Chairperson Arnett that 30 percent plans are underway on the University to Southern section and are expected in October 03. He also confirmed the Arizona Avenue to Gilbert Road section will be advertised this month.
- Chairperson Arnett asked about the status of the South Mountain Corridor. Mr. Hayden stated the Department continues to meet with Tribal administration and landowners concerning the east section of the corridor. Three possible alternative corridors have been identified for study and a fourth, all Indian community land, alternative has been suggested.
- Ron Gawlitta asked if any alignments, other than those on Indian land, are being given serious consideration. Mr. Hayden responded yes, stating Pecos Road from I-10 to South Mountain Park is the baseline alternative being studied. He stated the Environmental Impact Statement is expected to be completed in 2005 and they have every intent of including an all Indian alignment in the east part of the valley as part of the South Mountain corridor.

4. I-17 Widening Study between SR 101-L & Black Canyon City Traffic Interchange:

Jackie Noblitt, Kimley-Horn & Associates, explained their mission is to prepare the design concept for the ultimate widening of I-17 and its accompanying long-range implementation plan. She stated the study limits are north of the Loop 101 to the south of the Black Canyon City. A DCR covering the entire distance, as well as an Environmental Assessment that will cover from just south of the Loop 101 to the New River TI, are being prepared. She said they are also looking at frontage roads between the Loop 101 and Carefree Highway and alternatives for the reconstruction of the Table Mesa TI. Their recommendation for the southern section, up to the Carefree Highway, is for a five-plus-one section and additional auxiliary lanes in areas where they do not currently exist. Their recommendation for the center section, from the Carefree Highway to New River, is for a four-plus-one section in each direction. North of New River Road, they are recommending four general use lanes in each direction without an HOV lane. The City of Phoenix has committed to design and construct one-way frontage roads to fill in gaps between Pinnacle Peak and Happy Valley as well as from Dixileta to the Carefree Highway. Once the frontage roads and intermediate interchanges are constructed by the City of Phoenix, the entire frontage road system can be converted to one way.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Chairperson Arnett asked if cost estimates have been developed with regard to the southern and center sections. Ms. Noblitt said the entire project is estimated to cost around \$450 million, including right-of-way costs. Chairperson Arnett urged the Department to do the widening in a manner that minimizes or eliminates future throw away costs.

- Mr. Gawlitta recommended they extend the HOV lane at the Loop 101 by one-quarter mile to help smooth out the transition from the Loop 101 to I-17.

5. Williams Gateway Freeway Study Update:

Paul Waung, DMJM-Harris, Inc., stated the City of Mesa initiated a study to look at a directional interchange that would connect the Santan Freeway to some kind of expressway that would extend in a southeast direction and turn east at Galveston to the Pinal County line. The purpose of the study was to look at the feasibility of developing a system interchange in the proposed area and define the footprint for the system interchange while preserving as much right-of-way as possible. He said the study also looked at how the system interchange would serve the Williams Gateway Airport and what impact it would have on the Santan Freeway. The study found that the proposed interchange is feasible, however a number of items, including ramps, would have to be retrofitted. The study further determined Hawes Road would be the best way to access the future airport terminal from the Santan Freeway. He said they also looked at a direct ramp connection from the expressway. He explained there were many unknown factors when the study was conducted and, consequently, a number of assumptions were made with regard to the expressway's alignment.

The following questions and comments were made:

- Chairperson Arnett pointed out ADOT is anxious to extend the expressway to Florence Junction. He asked how someone would access the airport if traveling east on the Loop 202. Mr. Waung explained they would travel along the Santan Freeway, take the Hawes Road exit, and go south into the airport.
- Chairperson Arnett asked if they considered continuing the expressway in a southeasterly direction so that it falls near the northern boundary of Queen Creek before turning east. Mr. Waung responded no. The intention of the study was to look at the connection to the Santan Freeway and provide access to the airport. The alignment itself will be the subject of another DCR.
- Chairperson Arnett recommended the Department work in coordination with the City of Mesa.

6. Call to the Public:

Dianne Barker, citizen, read a letter she submitted for the record, asking the Committee to provide a public response to her previous written requests. Chairperson Arnett directed staff to review and respond to Ms. Barker's requests. He said he has been told by counsel that the Committee has no jurisdiction over RPTA until HB2292 is ratified by the Legislature. Ms. Barker noted the FTA sent a letter July 18, 2003 outlining concerns about the light rail project, one of which was safety. She said the FTA directed ADOT to establish a Safety Oversight Commission. She offered to forward a copy of the letter to the Committee. Chairperson Arnett reiterated that the Committee has no jurisdiction over RPTA or safety issues at the present time.

7. Next Scheduled Meeting:

Tuesday, November 18, 2003, 5:00 p.m.

Arizona Department of Transportation Board Room 145-147

206 South 17th Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85017

8. CTOC Member Reports:

No reports were made.

9. Closing comments and Adjournment:

No comments were made.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.